

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-13 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02
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FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6718
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T MAPUTO 0218

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, MZ, XO
SUBJECT: US SOVIET TALKS ON INDIAN OCEAN

REF: 77 STATE 302015

1. IN RESPONSE TO INTEREST EXPRESSED BY FOREIGN MINISTER
CHISSANO REGARDING STATUS OF US SOVIET INDIAN OCEAN TALKS.
AMBASSADOR ARRANGED BRIEFING FOR CHISSANO ON FEBRUARY 17
TALKING POINTS IN REFTEL WERE USED AS BASIS FOR THIS
BRIEFING.

2. IN COURSE OF DISCUSSION CHISSANO MADE TWO POINTS WORTH
REPORTING. FIRST, HE SAID THAT HE WAS
AWARE THAT THERE HAD BEEN ARTICLES IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN
PRESS ALLEGING THAT THE SOVIETS WERE BUILDING A MILITARY
BASE IN OR NEAR NACALA. CHISSANO SAID HE WANTED ME TO
KNOW THAT THERE WAS NO TRUTH WHATSOEVER TO THESE REPORTS
JUST AS THERE HAD BEEN NO TRUTH TO EARLIER REPORTS OF A
SOVIET BASE ON BAZZARUTO ISLAND (SEE 77 MAPUTO 0028 AND
PREVIOUS). CHISSANO SAID THAT THE MOZAMBICANS HAVE
ACTUALLY TOLD THE SOVIETS THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE GIVEN
ANY MILITARY FACILITIES IN MOZAMBIQUE. (IT WAS NOT

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CLEAR FROM CHISSANO'S COMMENTS WHETHER THE SOVIETS
MAY HAVE SOUGHT SUCH FACILITIES AND BEEN TURNED
DOWN OR WHETHER MOZAMBIQUE GOVERNMENT HAD MADE THEIR
POSITION CLEAR THUS PRECLUDING SERIOUS PROBING
BY THE SOVIETS. NOR DID CHISSANO STATE WHEN THE MOZAMBICANS
MAY HAVE TOLD THE SOVIETS THIS).

3. SECOND CHISSANO SAID THAT PRESIDENT MACHEL CONTINUES TO BE VERY MUCH INTERESTED IN OUR INDIAN OCEAN TALKS, AND APPRECIATES THE CONFIDENTIAL BRIEFINGS WE HAVE PROVIDED HIM OF THE COURSE OF THE TALKS. IN THE EVENT THERE WERE SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS AT THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED FOURTH ROUND OF TALKS, CHISSANO HOPED WE WOULD LET THE PRESIDENT AND HIM KNOW, I ASSURED HIM WE WOULD.

4. COMMENT. TWO EMBOFF VISITED NACALA FROM FEBRUARY 10 TO 13. WHILE THEY DID NOT VISIT THE MILITARY AIRFIELD WHICH IS CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC, THEY DID VISIT THE PORT AND TALKED TO NUMEROUS RESIDENTS OF THE AREA. AS BEST THEY COULD DETERMINE, THERE HAS BEEN VERY LITTLE ACTIVITY OF ANY KIND IN THE NACALA AREA DURING THE PAST YEAR. RESIDENT WHO WORK AT THE PORT SAY THERE HAVE BEEN SOVIET ARMS DELIVERIES TO NACALA PORT SINCE EARLY 1977. THE EMBOFFS DO NOT BELIEVE THE SOVIETS ARE ENGAGED IN ANY MAJOR CONSTRUCTION OR SIGNIFICANT MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THE NACALA AREA.
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